

The Brethren's Evangelist.

H. R. HOLSINGER & CO.,

"LEAVING THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, LET US GO ON UNTO PERFECTION."

\$2.00 per Annum in Advance.

VOL. V.

ASHLAND, O., WEDNESDAY, DEC. 5, 1883.

NO. 48.

BEECHER, EVOLUTION, SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE.

Being a Reply to Henry Ward Beecher's California Lectures.

BY PROF. J. A. MILLER, D. D., M. D.

"He that is first in his own cause, seemeth just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."—Prov. 18: 17.

(CONTINUED.)

Then add this to the fact that the Jews as a race have always believed and still do believe the fact. It becomes perfectly inconceivable how these two nations should chronicle an event, and the children of Israel be made to believe such an event took place and that they were eye-witnesses of it, and as such admitted it as a part of their scripture, if such an event did not occur. It might be well for Beecher and his infidel associates to remember that it is the prerogative of the Almighty to run the machinery of this world whichever way he pleases, or to cause it to stand still if he sees fit, and it was none of their business. He will do it without consulting them, whenever it serves his purpose.

Our lecturer then informed his Stockton audience, "That a great revolution of thought is taking place. The foundation is laid, and the result is just as certain as the shining of the sun." A scientist should always be definite and precise; but Beecher is always indefinite and profuse, when precisior is most desirable. If he is the honest man he claims to be, this is certainly unbecoming in honesty, and is not characteristic of it. "A great revolution in thought," we are told is "taking place," but he does not tell us what in, or what is its productive cause, consequently, on both these points we are left to inference. If he refers to the "revolution" taking place in his own mind in favor of evolution, he mistakes when he calls it "great" as it is but a small, simple manifestation of the evolutionistic law of "Reversion." At seventy years of age cut loose from his early moorings he is reverting back to the vacillating, indecision and uncertainty of the school boy of sixteen, and as this is not an unusual occurrence there can be nothing "great" about it.

If on the other hand he refers to evolution, I have only to ask, what is there great about it, except its great failure to furnish a tangible system of ethnology. This theory was advanced hundreds of years ago. Strauss advanced it years ago in Germany. Darwin embraced, and then modified Strauss. Haeckel, a German Atheist of Jena adopted Darwinism and gave it his influence; but added "spontaneous generation" in order to carry out his neological ideas, and exclude Deity from the throne of the universe. Pierpont prevented its being taught in the public schools of Germany on the grounds "That it was merely an hypothesis, and should not be transmitted as a fact." Dr. Heer declares "The doctrine of the transformation of the species is decidedly contradicted by facts." Dr. Wallace, whom Beecher quotes, without credit, says, "It is a curious circumstance, that notwithstanding the attention that has been directed to this subject in every part of the world; no advance whatever has been made for a considerable number of years, in detecting the time, or mode of man's origin; no evidence of a connecting link has been found," and even Darwin says he has no "hope that it ever will be."

But Beecher appears to be oblivious of the fact, that the foundation, and the whole superstructure of evolution built upon it, has been scathed, charred and demolished by the scientific Christian lightning of his next-door and scattered like chaff to the four winds of heaven. Perhaps our Brooklyn Divine, was too busily engaged preparing lectures on his favorite theme, to deliver at \$500 or \$1000 per evening, to attack the inspiration of the Bible, to scoff at future punishment, and announce his "modified view of the atonement; and to pay any attention to such minor matters as the overthrow of evolution, which has silenced its founders and paralyzed the pen of its giant defenders, such as Darwin, Huxley, Haeckel, Spencer, &c. Hence to now propagate it, it requires eloquence, not logic; unblushing assertion, not facts; presumptive position, to lend force to *ex cathedra* statement, unsustained and unsustainable by a single well authenticated fact. And who so fit to advocate and make money out of this decomposing carcass, as Henry Ward Beecher, who now has no principle to sacrifice, and no character to lose.

He then goes on to refer to what he is pleased to call, "A great revolution in the matter of Geology," and adds, "We had always supposed that one day the Lord had set out to manufacture a world and He began and fixed out one day and set that down, and then He took hold of the next day and did so much more; and in six days He built up this tolerably good world of ours, with all its animals and insects; its air and sea, and light and its plants and the whole thing except man; and He then took and rubbed some dirt together for him, and a great many men have been dirty ever since." This last sentence is certainly true; for I know one in Brooklyn, sustained by a powerful church organization, and white washed by a court, and the whole has failed to wash away the stain which at least, indiscretion, has left upon both his character and reputation; and this fact apparently has produced such a morbid impress on his sensibilities, that he has at last concluded he must have descended from "a monkey."

But he continues; "Now comes Geology, and to the amazement of men who believe God did write on two tables of stone on the mount,* it (Geology) finds He (God) has been writing on tables outside of mount Sinai, all over the world; and when the strata of the earth came to be examined men found the record of life in it, and successions of life, and periods of formation, which upset the old six-day notions, and the old six thousand chronological nations of the earth."

"till men finally whispered 20,800,000 years, and finally they do not hesitate to say, millions of years the earth has occupied in creation." And then as if to deter a review, he adds, "The absolute, literal, six days of creation have gone under; and anybody who undertakes to defend them, will go under too."

"Under" what? He fails to tell. But suppose they do; if there are still men in the world who prefer "going under" standing fairly and squarely on the truth of the Bible, in preference to being tossed hither and thither like a bubble on life's tempestuous wave, it may be consoling to Beecher to know he is not one of them. For me I would rather "go under" clasping the truth of God to my heart, than to be like him, at 70 years of age, a wreck afloat, without anchor, sail or compass, dashed by each popular contending wave till almost stranded on life's last shore, he cries so as to be heard above the howling storm, "I am only anxious to know where I am going." God pity poor Beecher! He simply accepts a human interpretation of the silent rocks, in preference to God's record of events, and we could leave him to his choice, did he not attempt to thrust his sentiments down our throats.

Let us then patiently inquire, what evidence have we that the Mosaic account of creation is correct. That testimony is twofold,

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE.

The *negative* testimony is found in the fact that neither history nor science, correctly understood, contradicts, modifies or changes in the smallest degree the literal Mosaic account of creation. Geology was unknown when it was written; and if it was incorrect, in any minor detail, we should expect Geology to point out infallibly the inaccuracy. We would naturally expect some peculiarity of geological structure or function to demonstrate the inaccuracy of the record. But instead I will show the reader that even geology says "That in six days God made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that in them is," and no history or science ever has or ever can, contradict it.

Positive. The Chinese, Hindoos, and Egyptians, are the only nations which claim to have any record of this event, and it is such as to lead the skeptic to say, that they must have borrowed it from the Bible; or else the writers of the Bible borrowed it from them. Being compelled to thus abandon the literary, historic objection, a certain class of would-be-scientists, such for instance as Beecher, inform us that geology, or the silent strata of earth's imperfectly understood, and only slightly examined rocks, either contradict, or require a modification, a peculiar construction of the Mosaic account of creation or of Bible

*If Beecher believed in the ten commandments then the revelations of Geology "amazed" him, and if he was not "amazed," then he must have been an unbeliever in the decalogue. Which was it, please? He can pose on which ever horn of his own dilemma he chooses.

language. Right here let me ask what is science? We hear so much about science! science!! science!!! It is heralded through the newspapers, announced on the rostrum, rings from the pulpit, is jabbered by the school boy, and is becoming the terror of gray hairs. What is this insatiate Moloch: science, which demands such universal homage from all mankind, before which even the effulgent light of revelation must pall, and the Christian philosopher must stand abashed. To accommodate Science, let its strongest advocates answer. Herbert Spencer says: "Science is simply a higher development of common knowledge." First Principles, p. 18. Huxley says, "Knowledge upon many subjects grows to be more and more perfect, and when it comes to be so accurate, and sure that it is capable of being proved to persons of suitable intelligence, it is called a science. The science of any subject, is the highest and most exact knowledge upon that subject." See Huxley's elements of Physiology, p. 11 Bosh! is this all there is of this bug-bear science? Dressed in lightning and draped with thunder, to terrify the unsuspecting and timid; used as a scare-crow, when facts are scarce. "The science of any subject, is the highest and most exact knowledge from that subject." Thank you, professor Huxley. "The highest and most exact knowledge" we have of creation, is what God Almighty has told us about it, and this being the "highest and most exact knowledge" we have on the subject, constitutes our science, and all else must bend to it. As God made the rocks He knows best how to read them. Now look at the sum total of the geologist's knowledge. What he knows, not what he believes, and what does it amount to? He finds strata piled on strata from the Laurentian up to the recent formation. He supplies for these strata imaginary names. He knows they are there and that is all he knows. When they were placed there, how they came there, he knows no more than an infant. He may speculate, theorize and believe—what he knows alone is science. Whether they were piled there, by the Almighty mandates in six minutes, six hours, six days, or six millions of ages, he knows absolutely nothing. These strata are silent as the granite peak; they only whisper forth; "The hand that made us is Divine." They know that fossil remains are found—that is science. But when, where and how, these fossil became deposited, and fossilized, they again know absolutely nothing. It is mere conjectures, and this human conjecture, based on presumption, is called in to contradict, or demand a modification of the statement of Almighty God. And Beecher, though sworn to defend the Bible, becomes the advocate of the conjecture in opposition to the statement of the "GREAT I AM." But to appear respectable he will say Moses means "periods" not days.

To call in question a theory stamped with the authority of such names as Buckland, Lyle, Chalmers, Smith, Hugh Miller, Powell, Agassiz, Sillman and Hitchcock, will no doubt by many be regarded as the climax of folly. Be it so. I would justify an infant contradicting the archangel Gabriel, if his statement conflicted with that of my divine Master.

If the geologist's knowledge is thus limited to these facts, then the whole chaotic theory of cosmogony and geology, at best is a mere assumption. It constitutes neither part nor parcel of a science. These men do not know, and from the very nature of the case can not, and to call what men do not know as science, is an utter perversion of language. Their assumption commences with the hypothesis, that at some period in the indefinite past, to man, now unknown, God created matter in a gaseous, or fluid or atomic form; and left it to be operated on by secondary causes, such as cohesion or attraction; and that about six thousand years since these causes succeeded in aggregating matter in its present form; and that it is here the Mosaic account of creation commences. They then attempt to reconcile the "six days" of Moses with their assumption by saying, "he means periods, not days." And weak, sickly ministers, try to construe the Hebrew word "days," so as to make it mean "periods," so as to furnish an interpretation in harmony with the popular assumption. Suppose now to show the weakness of their position we use their own terms. They say, "It may" (the emphasis is mine) "have taken millions of ages to aggregate matter in

its present form." We say, "It may have taken six days." So far both presumptions, hang suspended on the term "may." But mine is sustained by a "thus saith the Lord." Theirs rest, on their own assumption. We need hardly refer to the result of this weak attempt to pervert a plain Bible statement, to accommodate the assumption of the supposed scientist. The objector rejects the attempt, and rejects it logically. For if "six days" in Bible parlance may mean "millions of ages," it may mean anything or nothing according to the caprice of its expounder; hence, he rejects it altogether; and if in the "beginning," means something else, then it is absurd, and if absurd its inspiration is a farce, and Beecher has the best of the Christian, the Bible and its defenders. On the other hand, we hold that the Bible means just what it says; and that geology must be reconciled with the Bible, and not the Bible with geology.

The Geologist's error, had its foundation in an erroneous assumption, based on a false philosophy; which while it had the sanction of antiquity, was also shrouded in its dark, benighted maze. The heathen, who taught the early Christian philosophy, taught him that "matter was eternal." Hence, Justin Martyr states "That Moses distinctly asserts that God formed the earth out of unfashioned matter." The geologist commenced the study of geology with his perceptive faculties darkened by this false philosophy; and on this has constructed his erroneous theory of cosmogony. For if our "earth was formed out of unfashioned matter," it certainly may have been millions of ages in forming; and this false theory of cosmogony has formed the foundation stone of all the materialism in the world. It has poisoned the church, corrupted the pulpit, and originated the sceptical idea that the Mosaic account of creation was incorrect, and unworthy the consideration of sound philosophy.

By this absurd rule, of unsound philosophical deduction, they with an air of triumph assert, that they have proven *a priori* and *a posteriori*, that matter is eternal, and having proved this, they ride on to the legitimate conclusion that two eternal principles, separate and independent can not exist, and that therefore, an eternal self existing God, is a contradiction of terms, and is a fable also. The legitimate result of this reasoning is Atheism, however much the supposed Christian who assumes it, may shrink from the conclusions of his own logic. Consequently, with this reasoning, or with this reasoner, the true Christian theist can form no compromise. He must overturn this false philosophy and the theory of cosmogony and geology built upon it; or have its advocates overturn and ignore the veracity of his Bible, deny its teachings, and scoff at its inspiration as Beecher does. The Christian theist need seek no interpretation of the book of God, from the silent, unintelligent, and imperfectly understood strata of our earth. For "The spirit of truth, shall guide you into all truth" is the declaration of the divine Master. John 16 and 13: and the promise is "and all thy children shall be taught of the Lord." Isaiah 54 and 13. The Christian theist has simply to remove the key-stone out of this geological arch, to see the whole superstructure built upon it fall into hopeless ruins at his feet. But the geologist pleads, that the various stratification of the earth could not have taken place in "six days," consequently must have been the work of successive ages. Perhaps so, if his theory of prior atomic particles was correct; but we doubt this and demand the proof, and until it is furnished we must be excused if we turn to our old fashioned Bible, and find it speaking in a voice louder than the seven thunders: "He spake and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast." Just pause for one moment till I show how the theory of necessary prior, atomic particles, and the necessary millions of ages built upon it, was shattered into fragments.

(To be Continued.)

Those who bear least, often complain most.

Defect in manners is usually the defect of fine perceptions. Elegance comes of no breeding, but of birth.—Emerson.

Of all the actions of a man's life his marriage does least concern other people, yet of all actions of our life 'tis most meddled with by other people.—Selden